

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 11, 2014

Agenda Item: City of Roundup Deer Management Plan

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 Minutes

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Background: In 2003 the Montana Legislature authorized cities to create plans to control wildlife to address public health and safety within city limits. Such plans must be approved by F&W Commission. In response to concerns and complaints expressed by its citizens concerning the growing population of “urban” deer and the attendant increased risk to human safety and property damage, the City of Roundup, in conjunction with FWP, has developed a Deer Management Plan for the City. The plan lays out goals, actions needed to meet goals and a management process to implement actions. The plan is patterned after plans already approved for the communities of Colstrip and Glendive. Public hunting, restricted to archery is the primary tool employed to manage urban deer numbers. Property owned by the City and Musselshell County where public hunting can occur has been identified. A process has been set up to involve public hunters in the deer management program. The plan was tentatively approved and put out for public comment at the November 13th Commission meeting.

Public Involvement Process & Results: In response to urban deer complaints in the City of Roundup, the Roundup City Council, Musselshell County Sheriff’s Department and the Musselshell County Commissioners worked with FWP to draft a Deer Management Plan. A Public Hearing of the Roundup City Council was held on October 7, 2014 to discuss the Deer Management Plan in and adjacent to the City of Roundup. A few residents and adjacent private property owners attended the Public Hearing and voiced some concern about hunters trespassing on private property but overall supported the Deer Management Plan. The Musselshell County Commissioners and the Musselshell County Sheriff have been contacted in regards to the plan and are signatories to the plan. Public comment was taken at the November 13th Commission meeting and during the comment period ending December 8th. As of November 26th there were 11 comments: 7 in favor, 0 against, and 4 that offered comments not pertinent to the plan.

Alternatives and Analysis: The City of Roundup has been proactive in developing a management plan that is both reasonable and effective. The City has sought FWP input and has collaborated with FWP on plan development. Alternatives would include reworking the plan to include adjustments, additions, or deletions that address inconsistencies or plan short comings.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: The agency recommends adopting the City of Roundup Deer Management Plan. This plan has been developed with input from the City, Sheriff’s Department and representatives from FWP’s Region 5 Wildlife and Enforcement Divisions. This plan should reduce the risk to public safety and human health caused by the urban deer population in the City of Roundup. This plan will also provide additional opportunity for public hunters to harvest deer in HD530.

Proposed Motion: I move the Commission adopt approval of the City of Roundup Deer Management Plan as presented.